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COOPERATION BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-third year

Letter dated 15 July 1998 from the representatives of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

We have the honour to transmit the text of a communiqué of the Commission for Partnership of the United States of America and the Baltic States of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania signed by Mr. Strobe Talbott, Deputy Secretary of State of the United States of America, Mr. Toomas Ilves, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Estonia, Dr. Valdis Birkavs, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia, and Mr. Algirdas Saudargas, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania, in Riga on 8 July 1998 (see annex).

We should be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under item 36 of the provisional agenda, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Toomas LUKK
Chargé d'affaires a.i. of
Estonia to the United Nations

(Signed) Oskaras JUSYS
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of
Lithuania to the United Nations

(Signed) Jānis PRIEDKALNS
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of
Latvia to the United Nations

(Signed) Bill RICHARDSON
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the
United States of America
to the United Nations

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Annex

Communiqué of the Commission for Partnership of the United States of America and the Baltic States of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, signed in Riga on 8 July 1998

The inaugural session of the United States-Baltic Partnership Commission convened in Riga on July 8, 1998. Latvia's President Guntis Ulmanis opened the session, and Foreign Minister Valdis Birkavs as host moderated the discussions. Foreign Minister Toomas Hendrik Ilves of Estonia, Foreign Minister Algirdas Saudargas of Lithuania and Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott of the United States of America led their countries' delegations. Rapporteurs from economic and security bilateral working groups presented the results of their meetings in recent months. Private sector representatives met in conjunction with the Partnership Commission to recommend promising ares for business initiatives in United States-Baltic economic cooperation.

The Partnership Commission was established under the Charter of Partnership among the Republics of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania and the United States of America which was signed on 16 January 1998 (see A/53/61, annex). Its purpose is to review annually progress towards meeting Charter goals, and to assess and implement Charter commitments for bilateral cooperation in the political, economic and security areas. Reflecting the Partners' common vision of a Europe whole and free, the goals of the Charter are jointly to create conditions for the full integration of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania into European and transatlantic political, economic, security and defence institutions, and to enhance democracy, prosperity, and security in the Baltic Sea region.

In accordance with the principles enshrined in the Charter, the Partners have accomplished the following:

- Committed themselves to promoting Baltic integration into European and transatlantic institutions, to furthering democratic and economic development, to fostering stability and to maintaining and further promoting constructive and good-neighbourly relations within the region;

- Affirmed their determination to expand United States-Baltic economic relations, particularly in the energy, transportation, communication, technology, and environmental areas, through building a public-private sector partnership focused on the region;

- Finalized plans for military cooperation in the year ahead, noting their support for one another's positions on arms control, regional security issues, and the Security Model in Vienna;

- Applauded the important progress that the Baltic States have made towards social integration in line with the principles of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE);

- Welcomed the continuous and practical work of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania that will progress them towards, and eventually through, the open doors of the Euro-Atlantic community's evolving and expanding

institutions, including the new North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO);

- Agreed to work together to assure in the near future the accession of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania into the World Trade Organization on appropriate commercial terms;

- Promoted further regional cooperation through such forums as the Council of Baltic Sea States and encouraged United States involvement in the Council's activities, including in the fields of environmental protection, nuclear safety, international trade, and combating organized crime;

- Welcomed the United States Northern European Initiative and agreed to work together, and with the private sector, to identify and implement concrete projects within this framework designed to foster regional energy and transportation strategies, broader trading and investment relationships, greater coordination in the fight against organized crime, and focused efforts for the protection of the environment;

- Agreed to intensify efforts to promote the security, prosperity and stability of the region, including the participation of the Russian Federation in regional cooperation.

The Partners concluded by identifying the key areas for United States-Baltic cooperation in the year ahead. They expressed their determination to coordinate more closely their diplomacy on a range of issues regarding regional cooperation as well as European security. They agreed to deepen economic cooperation in the target areas of energy, transportation, communication and the environment, and to seek ways of engaging the private sector more fully in these important spheres. The Partners stressed the importance of continuous United States military assistance for improving self-defence capabilities and the quality of military life, and for further implementation of the NATO interoperability objectives of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. In this context, the Partners agreed to move forward expeditiously in implementing the United States Defence Assessment study. They also committed themselves to achieving continued progress in fully integrating Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania into European and trans-Atlantic institutions, including in supporting the preparations for integration with the European Union, NATO and the World Trade Organization.

Finally, the Partners agreed to convene the next meeting of the United States-Baltic Partnership Commission in Washington, D.C. in 1999.

(Signed) Toomas Hendrik ILVES
Minister for Foreign Affairs
Republic of Estonia

(Signed) Valdis BIRKAVS
Minister for Foreign Affairs
Republic of Latvia

(Signed) Algirdas SAUDARGAS
Minister for Foreign Affairs
Republic of Lithuania

(Signed) Strobe TALBOTT
Deputy Secretary of State
United States of America